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SENSITIVE

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SUBJECT: MOZAMBIQUE: TIP INTERIM ASSESSMENT

Ref A) STATE 147232 B) MAPUTO 1293

¶1. (U) Since March 2007, the Government of Mozambique (GRM) has made some progress in combating trafficking in persons. The comprehensive anti-trafficking in persons bill drafted jointly by the GRM and civil society was approved by the Council of Ministers in August. The head of the committee responsible for scheduling the legislative agenda is confident that the bill will be approved by the National Assembly in March 2008 (Comment: the October-December National Assembly session was cut short by a month to provide extra time to prepare for provincial elections, which likely bumped the anti-TIP bill to the early 2008 National Assembly session End Comment). Both civil society leaders and US Embassy officials have already met with the above committee to encourage that the bill be scheduled for debate and vote in the first trimester of 2008.

¶2. (U) The GRM has yet to launch a nationwide campaign to foster public awareness of the issue among government officials and private citizens. As a result, the majority of the population (including many law enforcement officials) still does not have a clear understanding of what constitutes trafficking in persons. The GRM also continues to lack formalized procedures for identifying potential victims and transferring them to organizations with the capacity to provide care. The Mozambican police (PRM) began including a one-day police (PRM) trafficking seminar for new officers in the central provinces (Sofala, Tete, Manica, and Zambezia) begun in 2006 was extended in November to include the northern provinces. Training began in Nampula and further seminars are scheduled for Cabo Delgado and Niassa provinces in January and February 2008. In addition to training, every police station in the country now has a center for women and children, including trafficking victims.

¶3. (U) Since March 2007, law enforcement officials investigated one case that may have involved trafficking. Some 100 workers at Golden Fields, a flower company owned by former Foreign Minister Leonard Simao and his wife, were recruited in Tete and Manica provinces, promised good working conditions, and provided with transportation to Maputo Province. Instead an inspector from the Ministry of Labor found workers in slave-like conditions, working long hours without proper protective equipment, living in tents, no access to bathrooms, and no access to safe drinking water. When the workers complained to the owner and asked to be provided transportation back to their home provinces, they were denied. Following the visit of the labor inspector, the GRM immediately suspended the company's operations and ordered the return of workers to their home provinces.

CHAPMAN